

---

If you believe you are eligible to vote and encounter difficulty registering, please contact the Election Administration office of the Nebraska Secretary of State:

Election Administration  
State Capitol, Suite 2300  
Lincoln, NE 68509  
(402) 471-3229 (voice)  
(402) 471-3237 (fax)  
(800) 833-7352 (TDD)

If the Nebraska Secretary of State is unable to help you, or to report a problem, contact:

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Voting Section, Rm. 7254 - NWB  
Washington, D.C. 20530  
(202) 307-2767 (voice)  
(800) 253-3931 (toll-free)  
(202) 307-3961 (fax)  
[www.usdoj.gov/crt](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt)

*This pamphlet is provided for informational purposes only, as an aid to further inquiry. The laws in many states are revised frequently, and may have changed since this pamphlet was issued. It is your responsibility to determine whether you are lawfully eligible to vote, and criminal penalties can result from voting when ineligible or making false statements on a registration form.*

Issued December, 2000

U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division



# Restoring Your Right to Vote



---

The right to vote is an important civil right in a democracy as well as a civic responsibility, and yet many persons who have been convicted of a crime do not know whether they are eligible to vote. For both federal and state elections, the right to vote is controlled by the law of the state in which you live. Some states restrict the right to vote for persons who have been convicted of a crime. This pamphlet is intended to help you determine whether you are eligible to vote in the state in which you live, and if so, what steps you must take to be permitted to vote.

### **What law governs whether my felony conviction limits my right to vote?**

The impact of a criminal conviction on the right to vote varies widely from state to state. Whether you can vote after being convicted of a crime is determined by the state in which you live, not the state in which you were convicted.

### **Can I vote while I'm incarcerated in Nebraska?**

If you are a resident of Nebraska, you cannot vote in Nebraska elections while you are incarcerated as a result of a felony conviction. If you are a resident of another state who is temporarily incarcerated in Nebraska, you may be able to vote by absentee ballot in your home state. You need to consult the law of your home state regarding both criminal convictions and absentee ballots to see if this is a possibility.

### **I have been released from incarceration. How do I restore my right to vote?**

If you were convicted in Nebraska, you must obtain a "warrant of discharge" from the Nebraska Board of Pardons to regain your right to vote. If you were not sentenced to confinement in a Department of Correctional Services adult correctional facility, this warrant should

---

automatically be issued by the Board of Pardons when the sentencing court certifies that you have satisfied your judgment and sentence. If you were sentenced to confinement in an adult correctional facility, you can only regain your right to vote by applying to the Board of Pardons for a warrant of discharge. To apply, you may write to the Board of Pardons care of the Governor, at P.O. Box 94848, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509, or telephone (402) 471-2244 for more information.

### **What if my conviction was for a federal crime or a crime in another state?**

In Nebraska, the effect of a conviction in another jurisdiction depends on both the type of crime for which you were convicted and the sentence that you served. If you were incarcerated in a penitentiary for a crime that would be punishable in Nebraska by incarceration in an adult correctional facility, then you are ineligible to vote in Nebraska unless you obtain a general pardon where you were convicted. To apply for a pardon for a state crime, you should contact the Governor's office of that state to determine what procedures apply. If you were convicted of a federal crime, you may contact:

Office of Pardon Attorney  
United States Department of Justice  
500 First Street, N.W., 4th floor  
Washington, D.C. 20530

If you were convicted of a crime outside of Nebraska, but you were not actually incarcerated in a penitentiary, your right to vote is not affected by your conviction, and you can register to vote. Also, if you were convicted of a crime outside of Nebraska that would not be punishable in Nebraska by confinement in an adult correctional facility, your right to vote is not affected by your conviction, and you can register to vote.

---

### **What happens if I move to another state?**

If you move to another state, your right to vote will be controlled by the laws of that state.

### **What are Nebraska's other voter registration requirements?**

To vote in Nebraska, you must be a U.S. citizen, be at least 18 years of age (or turn 18 by the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November), live in Nebraska, and not have been officially found mentally incompetent.

### **When do I need to register to vote?**

You can register to vote in Nebraska at any time. However, if you register by mail, in order to be able to vote in the next election, your registration form must be postmarked by the third Friday before the election.

### **Where do I go to register?**

Registration is available at many places in Nebraska, including your County Clerk's office and various service agencies. Contact your County Clerk or Election Commissioner to find out which service agencies provide voter registration.